

## Representative **Joe McDermott**

### **Maury Island.**

Good news: 34th District lawmakers and Preserve Our Islands blocked a Glacier Northwest attempt to sidestep Maury Island's designation as an aquatic preserve and proceed with their mining plans. We also passed Sen. Erik Poulsen's budget directive that urges the Department of Natural Resources to protect the Maury Island Aquatic Reserve among others.

### **Helping Home Care Workers.**

My proposal to bring collective bargaining laws into line with the public's vote on Initiative 775 is now law. I regret that a 25-cent per hour raise provided to home care workers in the revised budget was vetoed due to the revenue shortfall.

### **National Guard Youth Challenge Program.**

The Legislature passed the bill I cosponsored to allow state funding for the National Guard Youth Challenge. It's a smart bargain. Federal funding pays 60% of the costs of this highly successful help for at-risk youth. Eighty-six percent of those who complete the program have entered college, finished high school, or earned full-time jobs.



**Representative  
Joe McDermott**

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**2002 Session Wrap Up**

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**Representative  
Joe McDermott**

## **2002 Session Wrap Up**

Dear Friends,

The Legislature finished on time, with a revised budget, historic transportation proposals and important local successes. While I am not happy about some choices that were made to solve the budget crisis, I'm pleased to report that:

- The education initiatives are funded.
- Nursing homes were spared from the budget axe.
- Proposed transportation plans are great for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and ferry users.
- The school anti-bullying law I championed was enacted.
- We won on key Maury Island issues.
- We blocked the attempted repeal of I-713 (humane animal trapping)

These and other session highlights are discussed inside. Please take a look. Let me also say thanks for the overwhelming response to my February survey. I'm proud of the support I heard for education, our environment, fixing the transportation crisis, and helping the truly needy.

Being a good representative begins with being a good listener, so please never hesitate to share your thoughts or complaints with me. I'd also enjoy seeing you at my **new 34th District office, located at 4711 44th Ave SW in West Seattle**. The phone number is (206) 923-5475.

Wishing you the best,

Joe McDermott



### **How to reach me:**

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**Revising the budget**

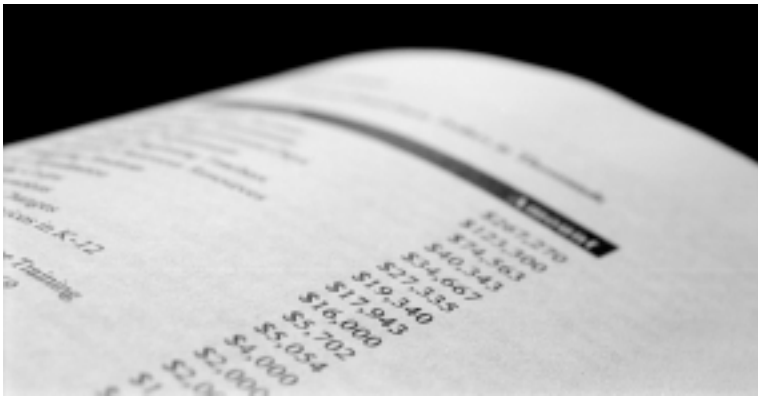
The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and slowing economy created a \$1.5 billion revenue shortfall in the state budget—the worst in decades. The Legislature addressed the problem without raising property, sales or business taxes, but did have to:

- Impose \$684 million in program cuts and reductions.
- Use \$450 million of Washington’s tobacco settlement funding.
- Raise \$88 million in new revenues, mainly by closing special-interest tax-loopholes, improving tax-law enforcement, and allowing a new Big Game lottery.
- Use \$325 million from the Emergency Reserve Fund.

About 900 state jobs were eliminated when the dust settled, and no cost-of-living adjustments were allowed for state employee salaries.

Some budget cuts were very painful to me, especially those to education, some human services and environmental protection. The good news is that schools experienced the smallest budget losses, and we saved funding for the education initiatives (I-728, I-732), nursing homes, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, medical interpreters, local public health agencies, and key services for seniors and children.

All in all, state spending growth was the smallest in 40 years, despite required increases for school enrollments, corrections and human service caseloads. Let me know if you’d like a detailed budget analysis. I’ll send you the same analysis that lawmakers got.

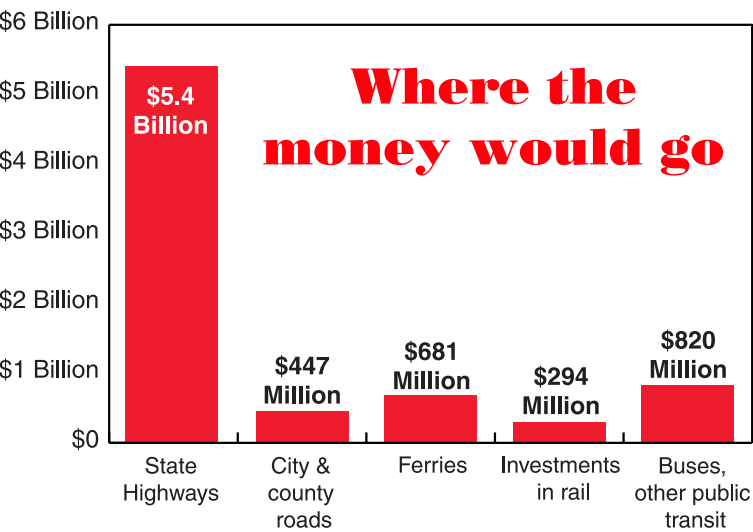


**Transportation**

My survey showed that everyone wants relief from the transportation crisis, and most 34th District residents were willing to pay higher gas taxes if the funds all go to transportation. Most responses said legislators should tackle the issue without a public vote.

I voted for the Legislature to enact a plan ourselves, but lost on that issue. However, the plan I voted for is the same one that will appear on the November ballot. I supported it because it’s a very good plan for our 34th District, including:

- \$450 million for the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Local money will be needed to complete the project, but this huge state contribution greatly reduces local costs.
- Strong funding for I-5 choke points and HOV lanes from Tacoma to Everett.
- \$681 million for ferries, including four new auto ferries and a Southworth to Seattle passenger-only run that will add room on the Vashon-Seattle run and ease traffic congestion in the Fauntleroy neighborhood.
- Major passenger and freight rail improvements from Seattle to Everett to reduce I-5 congestion.



Overall, the plan sent to voters would raise \$7.6 billion, mainly for highway improvements. Funding would come mostly from a 9-cent-a-gallon gas tax increase. I thought the plan should do even more for buses and other alternatives to solo driving (see earlier chart), but the strong local investments earned my support.

We also enacted strong transportation efficiency and accountability mandates and a new law to give our region more control over our transportation future. It lets local voters raise transportation revenues dedicated solely to local needs. Ending legislative gridlock on transportation was the biggest accomplishment of the session.



**Some personal highlights**

**Saving the humane trapping initiative (I-713).**

The people voted in Nov. 2000 to ban the use of steel-jawed and other inhumane animal traps for recreation and the fur trade. Initiative backers and I supported amendments to clarify that I-713 didn’t apply to nuisances such as gophers and moles. But alarmingly, the Senate voted to totally repeal I-713, claiming voters didn’t know what they were doing! I helped lead the House effort to save I-713, arguing that repeal would hurt wildlife and undermine the people’s right of initiative. We prevailed.

**Stopping school bullying.**

I was proud to be at the signing ceremony for the new school safety law that requires firm anti-bullying policies in all schools. It was a victory not only for me as a sponsor, but for everyone who believes bullying fuels a climate of fear that destroys the learning environment and threatens lives.